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PART I

Punjab Government Notifications and Orders

GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FARMER WELFARE

(Agriculture-4 Branch)

NOTIFICATION

The 18th November, 2020

No. 04/24/2019-Agri.4(4)/7224.-WHEREAS Punjab has emerged as a national hub for production of Potato and is largely known as 'Seed Potato' producing State due to aphid free climate window and favourable environmental condition for disease free seed production. It produces around 30 Lakh MTs of Potato every year, out of which 4 Lakh MT is required as 'Seed Potato' for Punjab itself and the State also supplies more than 13 Lakh MT as 'Seed Potato' to other states and export as well. However, despite the huge demand for Certified 'Seed Potato', the state farmers entire demand is not met due to supply and price constraints; the farmers have to instead use the next generation i.e Truthful generation in 'Seed Potato'. In order to provide this, there is also an imperative need to regulate the production of Truthful 'Seed Potato' so that the farmers get genuine and quality 'Seed Potato' and the State sustains its Stature of supplier of high quality 'Seed Potato'.

AND WHEREAS, In order to overcome this problem as well as to complete the cycle of all generations from 'Breeder' to 'Foundation' to 'Certified' and then to 'Truthful', the traceability of 'Truthful' Seed Potato is required which is only possible through leveraging of technology. Traceability will be not only strengthen the entire 'value chain' of pure and genuine 'Seed Potato' production but will also be helpful to the State to know the exact quantity of 'Seed Potato' marketed apart from restraining the unscrupulous traders/private companies to exploit the farmers due to malpractices, as they are selling seed of other states under the guise of 'Punjab Potato Seed' brand, thus bringing a bad name to the State and resulting in loss of market for the genuine Punjab farmers at the national and international level. For farmers, Traceability would help in fetching better prices in distant domestic as well as export markets.

AND WHEREAS in 2019, Punjab Agri Export Corporation Limited (PAGREXCO) implemented Seed Potato Traceability and Certification System in Punjab in association with Punjab State Seed Certification Authority (PSSCA) and Department of Horticulture, Punjab vide Endst. No. 4/24/2019-Agri.4-(4)/4940 dated 25.07.2019, upto the level of 'Certified' Seed Potato through the use of 'blockchain technology' which is trusted as a global best practice.

AND WHEREAS, in order to regulate the production, traceability and authentication of 'Truthful Seed Potato' it has been decided that there would be no production / sale of 'Seed Potato' under the 'Truthful Label' until and unless the production, traceability and authentication of the 'Truthful Label' Seed Potato' is done through Seed Potato Traceability & Certification System adopted by the State of Punjab, as mentioned above. Traceability and authenticity of 'Truthful Label Seed Potato' will be traced on the basis of previous year's traceability jointly done by PSSCA, Department of Horticulture & PAGREXCO. Since PSSCA has the mandate till the 'Certified' seed level only, further Traceability and Authentication of 'Truthful Label Seed Potato' multiplied beyond 'Certified' stage will be done by PAGREXCO with support from the Department of Horticulture with the following conditions:-

- A. All protocols for traceability and certification of 'Truthful Label' Seed Potato will be similar to certification standards for 'Certified' seed potato.
- B. The tags for traceability and certification along with QR code will be issued by PAGREXCO with a distinct color other than used for Breeder, Foundation or Certified Seed or any previous generation of seed / tuber.
- C. PAGREXCO would get the traceability work done through Agri based IT Portal.
- D. In order to scale up this work as well as to protect the interest of small farmers of Punjab. PAGREXCO would undertake the activities pertaining to branding and certification of the seed potato of Punjab, forward linkages within India and abroad the marketing and sale of Punjab Potato seed, set up a laboratory for potato seed sample testing, etc. The PAGREXCO shall charge user fee from the farmers for traceability and certification work undertaken by it. As such PAGREXCO is authorized to charge a per acre user fee from the prospective potato growers desirous of traceability based potato seed certification. The PAGREXCO will make this project financially self-sustainable. While fixing the user charge PAGREXCO would also factor into account all costs paid to the Seed Certification Authority for certification of potato seed.
- E. The entire certification process will be managed through a software and the Certifying Authority would do the due certification through the software only so that the entire transparency is maintained.
- F. PAGREXCO will ensure that this seed potato traceability & certification system is implemented from the coming potato season & MD PAIC/PAGREXCO will regularly monitor the process of this system.

These orders will come into force with potato sowing season 2020-21.

Sd/-

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Chandigarh